

**Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy
Sustainability Appraisal**

**Adoption Statement
November 2015**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy was adopted on 9th November 2015. This Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement has been prepared under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations as part of the process.
- 1.2. The adopted Core Strategy, full Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report and its associated documents, along with further details of the adoption process, can be found at the Charnwood Borough Council website www.charnwood.gov.uk/localplan, Charnwood Borough Council's offices, libraries within the Borough and Leicestershire County Council's Main Reception at County Hall.
- 1.3. SA is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It also incorporates the requirements of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SA considers the environmental, economic and social effects of implementing the Core Strategy, and the reasonable alternatives, with the purpose of promoting the objectives of sustainable development and ensuring their integration within the plan making process. The Planning Inspector, in his Report on the examination into the Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy, issued on the 21st September 2015, recognises that the SA has been carried out and is adequate.
- 1.4. Alongside the SA work, Charnwood Borough Council has undertaken a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with guidance and the regulations. This was carried out to assess the impacts of the Core Strategy on the conservation objectives of European sites and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of those sites. The HRA was carried out to the satisfaction of Natural England and concluded that the Core Strategy is not likely to have a significant effect upon any European site, including the River Mease SAC and Rutland Water SPA/Ramsar site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects; and, therefore, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 1.5. The "SEA" Regulations (Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Regulation 16(3) and (4)) require the Council to prepare an adoption statement as soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of the Core Strategy which should contain the following:-
 - a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
 - b) how the environmental report has been taken into account;
 - c) how opinions expressed in response to:

- i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d);
 - ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4);
- have been taken into account;
- d) how the results of any consultation entered into under regulation 14 have been taken into account;
 - e) the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
 - f) the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

1.6. The following sections of this statement present the information required to meet the “SEA” regulations and show how the development of the Core Strategy has maximised the contribution the plan makes to sustainable development and minimises any potential adverse impacts.

2. a) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Core Strategy

2.1 SA (including environmental considerations) has informed the preparation of the Core Strategy in the following ways:

- a) Preparing an SA Report on the likely significant effects of various iterations of the draft Core Strategy;
- b) Carrying out consultation on the SA Report;
- c) Taking into account the SA Report and the results of consultation in decision making; and
- d) Providing information when the Core Strategy is adopted and showing how the results of the environmental assessment have been taken into account.

2.2 The table below outlines the stages in the preparation of the Core Strategy alongside the associated SA reports.

Plan Iteration/Stage	Accompanying SA Work
Pre-Production	SA Scoping Report (2005)
Core Strategy Issues and Options (2005)	Core Strategy DPD Preferred Options SA Report (2006)
Charnwood 2021: Planning Our Next Generation (Core Strategy	

Plan Iteration/Stage	Accompanying SA Work
Preferred Options) (2006)	
Planning for Our Next Generation: Alternative Strategies (2007)	Core Strategy 2021 SA Report: Main Report (2007)
Charnwood 2026: Planning for Our Next Generation – Further Consultation (October 2008)	Charnwood 2026 Core Strategy DPD: Further Consultation Report – SA Report (September 2008)
Planning for Growth: Core Strategy Supplementary Consultation (June 2012)	Core Strategy Supplementary Consultation: Interim SA Report (June 2012)
Draft Core Strategy (March 2013)	SA Report (March 2013)
N/A (Submission of Core Strategy – December 2013)	Charnwood Core Strategy SA Supplementary Report (October 2013) Charnwood Core Strategy SA Report Executive Summary (December 2013)
N/A (Main Modifications – April 2015)	Charnwood Core Strategy Main Modifications SA Addendum (March 2015)
N/A (Additional Main Modification – July 2015)	Additional Proposed Main Modification to the Charnwood Core Strategy: SA Addendum (July 2015)
N/A (Draft Core Strategy – March 2013; Main Modifications - April 2015; Additional Main Modification – July 2015)	Charnwood Local Plan (Core Strategy) Updated SA Report (August 2015)
Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy (November 2015)	Charnwood Core Strategy SA Adoption Statement (November 2015)

3. b) How the environmental report has been taken into account

3.1 The development and appraisal of options within the Core Strategy has been an iterative process, with policy options being revised to take account of appraisal findings and consultation responses. The Charnwood Local Plan (Core Strategy) Updated Sustainability Appraisal Report (2015) provides details

of how the recommendations of the SA, incorporating the environmental report, have been taken into account and incorporated throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy. These iterations are summarised below.

3.2 Scoping Report

A Scoping Report was completed in October 2005 identifying baseline data and reviewed relevant plans and programmes for Charnwood Borough. It identified key sustainability issues facing Charnwood and described the SA methodology proposed. It also set out the SA Framework against which to appraise the Core Strategy. The SA Scoping Report including SA Framework was updated in 2009 following changes in Government guidance.

3.3 Core Strategy Preferred Options SA Report (February 2006)

An Issues and Options Paper on the Core Strategy was published in June 2005 which identified possible directions for growth and was subject to SA work. This informed a further report, the Core Strategy Preferred Options published February 2006, which presented a number of preferred options, including a settlement strategy, options for directions of growth and other policies. An SA Report was published alongside Core Strategy Preferred Options Report 2006.

3.4 Core Strategy 2021: SA Report (October 2007)

The SA work was an unpublished, internal review of the 2006 SA and considered alternative policy drafts covering strategies for development, locations for growth and approaches to different policy areas to ensure impartiality and transparency in decision making. It made a number of recommendations to be incorporated into the Preferred Option Core Strategy to optimise its contribution towards the SA objectives. These were addressed in the 2008 and 2013 versions of the Core Strategy.

3.5 Charnwood 2026 Core Strategy Further Consultation SA Report (September 2008)

The Core Strategy Further Consultation Report was published for consultation in 2008. An SA Report was prepared as part of developing the Further Consultation Report and considered alternatives for a variety of topics, including strategic directions of growth, growth options for settlements and road options. This assisted the plan preparation process by identifying the most sustainable options.

3.6 Core Strategy Supplementary Consultation, Interim SA Report (June 2012)

The Core Strategy Supplementary Consultation Report was published following significant changes in planning policy through the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and in light of new evidence for the Borough's development needs. The Core Strategy Supplementary Consultation Report appraised alternative options to meet the Borough's need for housing and

employment land. The Interim SA Report 2012 informed the selection of a preferred development strategy within the Draft Charnwood Core Strategy.

3.7 Draft Charnwood Core Strategy SA Report (March 2013)

The Draft Charnwood Core Strategy was prepared in 2013, following rigorous application of the SA process at various iterations of the Core Strategy. The Draft Charnwood Core Strategy SA Report covered the period from 2004 to submission in 2013 and describes how reasonable alternatives were identified for testing the development strategy, and how the SA of reasonable alternatives informed the development strategy and other policies within the Core Strategy.

3.8 Charnwood Core Strategy SA Supplementary Report (October 2013)

The SA Supplementary Report was produced following the revocation of the East Midlands Regional Plan on the 12th April 2013. The reasonable alternatives for the spatial strategy had up to this point been informed by the Regional Plan. Its revocation altered the policy context and so strategic options such as urban concentration were reappraised against the SA objectives. The SA Supplementary Report also clarified the reasons for rejecting or selecting reasonable alternatives

3.9 Charnwood Core Strategy SA Report Executive Summary (December 2013)

This summarised the SA work undertaken over the period from 2004 to the submission of the Core Strategy in 2013.

3.10 Charnwood Core Strategy Main Modifications SA Addendum (March 2015)

Following the Examination in Public hearing sessions, the Planning Inspector stated that a number of Main Modifications were required to make the Core Strategy sound. The SA Addendum considers how each of the Main Modifications affects the SA findings in the Draft Charnwood Core Strategy SA Report (March 2013), including the cumulative effects of the Core Strategy.

3.11 Charnwood Core Strategy Additional Main Modification SA Addendum (July 2015)

The additional SA Addendum addresses the implications of a further proposed Main Modification relating to wind energy for the SA findings set out in the March 2013 SA report.

3.12 Charnwood Local Plan (Core Strategy) Updated SA Report (August 2015)

The updated SA report provides a full SA report of the Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy (June 2013) incorporating the Main Modifications. The report collates a number of other SA documents which have been published since the previous full SA report was produced in March 2013. In particular, the SA matrices and the summary of SA findings have been updated to reflect the

implications of the Main Modifications and in addition, the baseline information has been updated.

3.13 Charnwood Core Strategy SA Adoption Statement (November 2015)

This Adoption Statement sets out how the SA has met the appropriate requirements.

4. c) How opinions expressed in response to:

- i) the invitation referred to in regulation 13(2)(d),**
 - ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4),**
- have been taken into account**

4.1 Charnwood Borough Council has undertaken consultation on the various iterations of the Core Strategy, together with the associated SA Reports. Details of the consultation, including those bodies and persons invited to make representations; how they were consulted; the main issues raised; and, how these comments have been taken into account are described in the Statement of Consultation and the Statement for Regulation 22(1)(c).

4.2 As regards the SA specifically, each consultation stage of the Core Strategy was accompanied by SA work which was also published for consultation at the same time. Formal consultation on the SA has been carried out as required by the SEA Regulations and comments have been sought from the main consultation bodies (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency). Comments received from these bodies, other bodies and public consultees have been taken into account in preparing the Core Strategy and SA; where these were considered appropriate the suitable changes have been made.

4.3 The Updated SA Report (2015) and associated Appendices (Appendix 2 to 7) provide details of the consultation comments that have been received in relation to earlier versions of the SA work and how they have been taken into account.

5. d) How the results of any consultation entered into under regulation 14 have been taken into account

5.1 Consultation under regulation 14 relates to potential significant transboundary effects on the environment of another Member State. The Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy is not considered to have any significant

environmental effects on another Member State; therefore, no consultations under regulation 14 have taken place.

6. e) The reasons for choosing the Core Strategy as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with

6.1 The SA process has considered reasonable alternatives to all Core Strategy policies and strategic housing and employment sites. The Charnwood Local Plan (Core Strategy) Updated SA Report (2015), in Chapter 5 and associated Appendices, presents an assessment of these and the reasons for choosing the approach outlined in the Core Strategy.

6.2 The Updated SA Report summarises the overall sustainability of the Core Strategy and concluded that it would have a wide range of positive and significant positive effects on the SA objectives, although a number of potential negative impacts are also associated with the scale and location of development proposed.

7. f) The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Core Strategy

7.1 The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of plans and programmes be monitored in order to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to take appropriate action. Alongside the SEA Directive's requirements the monitoring of significant effects will also include social and economic effects that have been predicted through the SA.

7.2 The Charnwood Local Plan (Core Strategy) Updated SA Report (2015) in Table 7.1 sets out a number of suggested indicators for monitoring the potential significant positive and negative sustainability effects of implementing the Core Strategy.

7.3 Alongside the significant effect indicators identified in the SA there is also a monitoring framework for the Core Strategy, the Charnwood Monitoring Framework. This identifies indicators and targets to monitor the performance of each policy in the Core Strategy.

7.4 The Charnwood Borough Council Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) has been produced for the last ten years and relates to the progress on the Local Development Scheme (LDS); obtaining information for core output indicators which monitor the delivery of sustainable development; and, assessing the extent to which the adopted Local Plan is achieving its objectives.

- 7.5 The monitoring of the significant sustainability effects will be integrated into the existing monitoring regime as part of the AMR. Subsequently, the AMR will include:
- i) assessment of the success of policy using output, significant effect and contextual indicators;
 - ii) consideration of significant and unforeseen effects, using indicators defined in the SA Report, to provide a picture of how the sustainability criteria of Charnwood are evolving; and
 - iii) recommendations for policy review and mitigation of significant effects if required in response to the policy and SA analyses.
- 7.6 These amendments to the AMR will ensure that the significant environmental effects of the Core Strategy are monitored and any unforeseen adverse effects are identified and appropriate action taken.

8. Further Information

- 8.1 To access the Sustainability Appraisal documents mentioned in this statement, please visit the web page at the following address:

<http://localplan.charnwood.gov.uk>

- 8.2 For further information please contact the Planning Policy Team at:

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